
23d NOVEMBER, 1804.

Read the first and second time, and ordered to be committed to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next.

A B I L L

To regulate the Clearance of Armed Merchant Vessels.

1 **Be it enacted**, by the Senate and House of Representatives
2 of the United States of America, in Congress assembled, That
3 after due notice of this act at the several custom houses, no mer-
4 chant vessel armed or provided with the means of being armed at sea,
5 shall receive a clearance, or be permitted to leave the port where
6 she may be so armed or provided, without bond, with two sufficient
7 sureties being given by the owner or owners, or by the master or
8 commander, to the use of the United States, in a sum equal to
9 double the value of said vessel, conditioned that such vessel shall
10 not make or commit any depredation, outrage, unlawful assault or
11 violence against the vessels, citizens, subjects, or territory of any
12 nation in amity with the United States ; *Provided*, That the regu-

lations herein contained shall not be construed to extend to vessels bound to any port or place in the Mediterranean, or beyond the cape of Good Hope.

Sec. 2. *And be it further enacted,* That if any armed merchant vessel clearing for any port or place within the Mediterranean or beyond the cape of Good Hope, shall make or commit any depredation, outrage, unlawful assault, or violence as aforesaid, on her voyage to or from, or at any place to which she may be bound, such vessel with her arms and cargo, or the value thereof shall be forfeited to the use of the United States.

Sec. 3. *And be it further enacted,* That on satisfactory evidence or information being given to the collector of any port, that any vessel within the same is armed or arming, or provided with the means of being armed at sea, for the purpose of committing any unlawful act as herein before expressed, or of carrying on by force of arms, any unlawful commerce, it shall be the duty of such collector to detain such vessel until the case be submitted to the President of the United States, who is hereby authorised to cause such vessel to be disarmed, or to order a clearance to be granted, as he shall judge proper.